

**Statement of Senator Larry Craig  
Senate Special Committee on Aging  
"Women and Aging: Bearing the Burden of  
Long-Term Care"  
February 6, 2002**

Good morning. Thank you for attending this Joint hearing between the Senate Special Committee on Aging and the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee in Aging.

We are all aware that women play a role in addressing the long-term care needs of their family members and loved ones. In fact, Idaho, consistent with the national average, has almost one quarter of its households providing care to family and friends over the age of 50. Through this hearing, we will all get a better understanding of the vast amount of care that is actually provided and the large toll that it can take on women providers.

We have the honor today of hearing testimony from many of my female colleagues who will share their unique experiences in caring for their own family members and friends. These individual stories, I believe, will be representative of the stories of thousands of women across this country.

On our second panel, we will be hearing from two of the outstanding advocacy groups on this issue. The Older Women's League will share with us specific financial and health concerns that can be raised for females when assisting a family member with their long-term service and support needs. And the National Alliance for Caregiving will speak about the role of women caregivers.

The title of this hearing the "Bearing the Burden of Long-Term Care." This is not meant to imply that caring for family members and friends is something that is uninviting and should be avoided. In fact, in my experience, most individuals want to help take care of their family members. Instead, we are holding this hearing to shed light on the issue so we can begin to assist the many daughters and wives who are struggling with the daily task of caring for older family members.

Again, I would like to thank the witnesses for testifying and I look forward to hearing your testimony. Thank You.